

Live Peaceably With All

(Romans 12:18)



**Observe Day of Prayer for World Peace
August 7, 1988**

Sponsored by the Christian Life Commission
of the Southern Baptist Convention

The Baptist Record

Published Since 1877

Thursday, August 4, 1988

Hunger gifts rise sharply in 1988

NASHVILLE (BP) — Southern Baptist gifts to their denomination's program of worldwide hunger ministries rose sharply during the first six months of 1988, compared to receipts for the same periods in 1986 and 1987.

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board reported gifts to hunger relief and development abroad during the first half of 1988 were 35 percent ahead of the six-month total for 1987 and 5 percent ahead of 1986.

Through June, the Foreign Mission Board had received \$3,524,367, com-

pared to 2,612,285 for 1987 and \$3,364,060 for 1986. Receipts for the first half of 1985 were \$5,519,454.

In contrast, gifts through June to domestic hunger through the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board were 3 percent behind 1987 and 7 percent ahead of 1986. Through June, the Home Mission Board received \$552,129, compared to \$570,363 for 1987, \$513,025 for 1986 and \$484,813 for 1985.

In 1985, Southern Baptists contributed a record \$11.8 million for combined hunger ministries abroad and at home.

Meridian team builds barn for world hunger relief

Fifteen members of Midway Church, Meridian, drove 1,150 miles to build a barn. The group made the 12-hour trip to World Hunger Relief, Inc. headquarters in Waco, Texas, to build a 4,200 sq. ft. all purpose building for this international training center.

Carl Ryther, a Southern Baptist missionary in Bangladesh during a time of political unrest, tidal waves, and famine assisted in planning and implementing simple food production designed to teach the Bengalis how to intensify their food production.

Ryther, an agronomist, says, "From that experience, I have developed a training system which includes Backyard Food Production and Agro-Forestry (sometimes called Alley Cropping.) These systems are understandably taught so the untrained and unskilled can learn quickly. Pilot projects have been successfully implemented in Africa, China, India, Haiti, Mexico, and in Texas.

Bill Webb, pastor of Midway Church, led his people in the missions-work project. They budgeted \$3,000; another \$2,500 was received in donations for supplies and equipment. This church gives 26% of its budget to the Cooperative Program. Personal involvement in missions projects such

as this is above and beyond.

Due to the extra gift, the original blueprints were changed to build Ryther's 40' x 105' all-purpose dream building. At the dedication Ryther said, "I have prayed for seven years for this tool to work with. It had to wait until you came forward."

The building will be used as a class room; for goat and rabbit pens; and for storage of equipment. Also, for the first time, Ryther will be able to implement experimentation with the animals as he has with the grow beds.

Agricultural graduates with an interest in careers in health and human welfare go to the Waco training facilities to participate in a two-year intern program, preparing themselves for missionary or social work. Southern Baptist missionaries trained by World Hunger Relief include Kathy Politowski, Brazil; Tracy Beatty, Terry and Kathy Waller, Africa. Ella Blaire is now in training for Southern Baptist mission service.

During the first six months, these young adults receive specialized on-the-job training under the supervision of Ryther, the director. Then they are assigned to a national leader in one of the international centers, rotating

their experiences between Waco and the field. Three of these centers are located within 100 miles of 3/4 of the world's population: Kenya, Africa; Bangalore, India; and Hunan, China.

The Meridian crew was not new to mission work projects. Senita Webb, the pastor's wife, said, "Our youth went on four mission trips and had so much fun that the adults said, 'We want to go too!' Last year two vans went to Indiana, held a revival at night, took census in the day, and held backyard Bible studies for the children in the afternoon. Trips were also taken to Honduras, California,

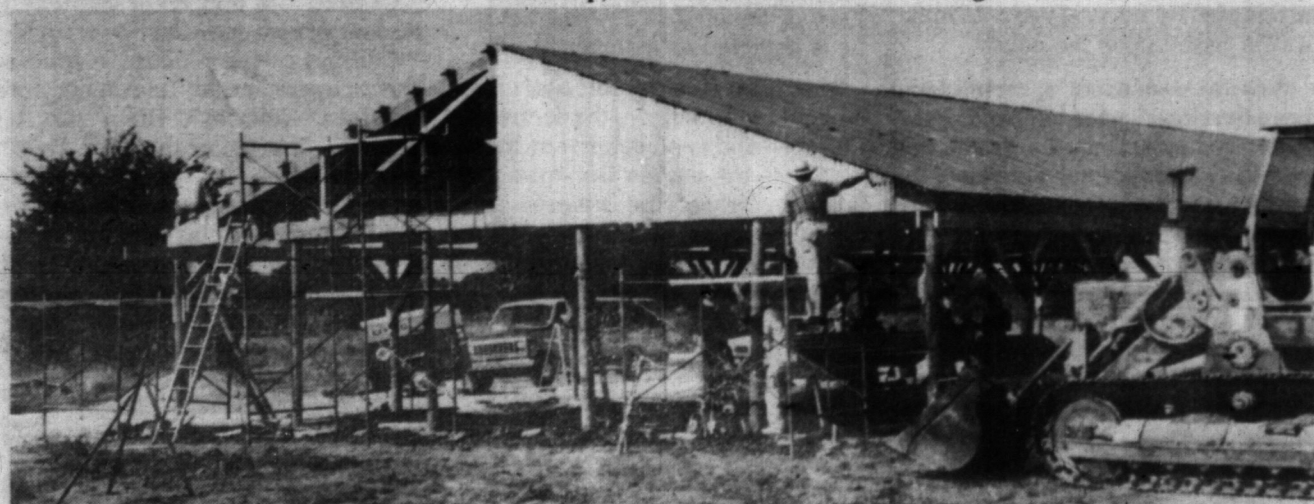
and the Philippines."

Midway's first contact with Carl Ryther and World Hunger Relief came several years ago through Pastor Webb's college roommate, former Southern Baptist missionary, Dwight Dudley. At that time the church assisted in repairs and construction at the Matamoros Baptist Children's Home and Experimental Farm in Mexico. Dwight had asked Carl to produce a garden on the orphanage grounds. In a year's time the dead sea bed produced food for the children's table.

On this trip, the vans left the church

early Sunday morning, June 26, with the congregation seeing them off with gifts of cookies and other treats.

For the week-long trip, the women did the cooking, the young adults worked in the grow beds of the experimental nursery, and the men raised the barn in the hot Texas sun. Credit was given to the Lord's protecting hand in that no serious injuries were sustained by the inexperienced crew. The project was completed on schedule and the group dedicated their completed building before leaving.



SOUTHERN BAPTIST HISTORICAL
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES
Historical Commission, SBC
Nashville, Tennessee

Editorials . . . by Don McGregor

Where the editor stands

When the present controversy began that now is gripping the Southern Baptist Convention, the plea of many "conservatives" was for seminary faculty members and others in denominational life to state where they stood on the issues in question.

As time went on, many professors did this, and indeed entire bodies of faculties did it; but it did not abate the storm of the controversy. The six seminary presidents put together their Glorieta Statement, which many thought was the finest thing to come along, but it did not assuage the rhetoric.

I have no idea that anyone cares to be informed as to where the editor stands. And if the information is provided, I don't know that it will make any difference in anyone's attitude.

But I have no problem in making such knowledge public.

I believe in the historicity of the first 11 chapters of Genesis. I learned most of my theological knowledge from listening to my preacher father. I

came out with the belief that the first 11 chapters of Genesis were literal history. In fact, in those days I knew of no reason to believe anything else.

I believe that Adam and Eve were real people. I believe that they disobeyed God.

I believe that the miracles took place and were supernatural just as they are described in scripture. We've got to believe that God could have performed the miracles, or he wouldn't be God. Why not believe that he did?

I believe that Christ was born of a virgin and that he lived a sinless life. I believe that he was both divine and human during his time on earth and that he is God himself.

I believe that he died to provide for all mankind once and for all the blood atonement that had been necessary all along. I believe that he will return to earth just as he left earth, in visible form.

I believe in a literal heaven and a literal hell.

I believe that God provided for us a perfect witness in his Word, the scripture, just as he provided for us a

perfect witness in the Word, his Son. Call the scripture inerrant or whatever you will to denote its designation as a "perfect treasure," I believe that what God gave us was perfect.

When I was very young, I remember asking my mother who wrote the Bible. Her answer was, "God." I came up with the concept that a leather bound copy dropped out of heaven. My concept hasn't changed a great deal since that day. I still believe that God was the author.

Perhaps all of that is too simplistic, I don't know. I do know that it's what I have lived by for a very long time.

And it is, I believe, where 95 percent of Southern Baptists stand. In 60 years of observing Southern Baptists, I have known a lot of them; and this is representative of the beliefs of just about all of them.

After this was written and before it went to the printer, I began to hear that some people were saying that the editor is a liberal. If that is liberalism, then we are going to have to redefine conservatism.

Guest opinion . . .

The last temptation

By Paul Jones

In 1955 Nikos Kazantzakis wrote a novel which he hoped would humanize the life of Christ. The result was a blasphemous rejection of the gospel account of the life of Christ and the creation of a work that for over 30 years has represented the culmination of idiosyncratic religious belief.

In 1983, Paramount Pictures withdrew from an alliance to produce a film based on the novel of Kazantzakis. Most observers believe that the outcry of conservative and evangelical Christians was a major factor in the withdrawal of Paramount Pictures from the planned project.

Now, another film producer is planning to release a celluloid adaptation of Kazantzakis' novel. "The Last Temptation of Christ" is scheduled for a late September release by Universal Pictures. The film is directed by Martin Scorsese, who has attempted for several years to make a film based upon the novel.

Several visions of a script have been developed, each having a slightly altered plot. Only the production company knows which version of the script is the basis for the movie. This has allowed the producer to deny the inclusion of some purported scenes.

However, if the film follows the basic plot, certain scenarios probably will be included — Christ will be depicted as an unsure leader who appears as a paranoid schizophrenic heeding visions which he is unsure are from God or Satan; John the Baptist will appear as the hysterical leader of a radical cult; Judas Iscariot will arise as the most loyal disciple; and, Mary Magdalene will be a former girlfriend of Christ who tempts Christ and haunts his fantasies. This perversion reaches its height in a fantasy sex scene occurring while Christ is hallucinating on the cross.

This yet-to-be-released film appears to be a blatant, contrived, and considered attempt to pervert the gospel account of the life of Christ. It is an attempt by secular minds to depict our Lord as a weak, compromised, and inconsistent person. The issue is not how many times our Lord is depicted as a sinner but that he is depicted as a sinner at all.

The film is a direct assault on biblical Christology — the doctrine of Christ — and is blasphemous in that it rejects the unique God-man relationship, denies the sinlessness of Christ, and depicts the life of Christ as recorded in scripture as false. It

thus denies the authority of scripture.

Humanistic depictions of Christ and his life on earth cannot be left unrefuted. While I do not want to stir up interest in the film and thus increase attendance, I believe we must address this blasphemous perversion of the sinless life of our Lord. Individuals and churches can take certain actions. Possibilities might be as follows:

Phone, write and/or telegraph the production company, Universal Pictures, 100 Universal City Plaza, Universal City, CA 91608, or MCA, Inc. (same address), Phone - (818) 777-1000.

Be prepared to write letters to the local newspapers to refute the claim that this is "responsible" or "acceptable" entertainment.

Use the pulpit to declare the sinless life of Christ and to reject any perversion of the biblical accounts.

Commit the matter to continual, fervent prayer.

Contact the local media (newspapers, radio, television, and theaters) and ask them not to publicize or promote this film. There are many fine Christians in this industry in Mississippi who will reject the promotion of this film.

If the film does come to a local

MILLIONS HAVE FOUND IT SO

THE WORD OF GOD

IS CHARACTERIZED AS BEING:

1. **PERFECT**, i.e., COMPLETE AND WITHOUT FAULT,
2. **SURE**, i.e., NOT VARIABLE,
3. **RIGHT**, i.e., STRAIGHT,
4. **PURE**, i.e., WITHOUT ALLOY
5. **CLEAN**, i.e., WITHOUT IMPURITIES,
6. **TRUE**, i.e., UTTERLY DEPENDABLE,

— PSALM 19: 7-9

"**THY RIGHTEOUSNESS IS AN EVERLASTING RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND THY LAW IS THE TRUTH.**" — PSALM 119: 142

Thanks to Miss Ed

Readers have noticed the story in this issue about the Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission's adoption of a resolution commending Edwina Robinson for her many years of service in indexing the Baptist Record.

The Baptist Record surely wants to join in this effort to pay tribute to this fine lady. Through many years she has meant more than could be measured to the life and work of Mississippi Baptists. Her ministry through the Woman's Missionary Union of our state defies description. Now she has completed a service to the Baptist Record that was totally necessary but almost as totally unnoticed by the general public. She kept up with everything that went in the

Baptist Record and prepared an index for it all. Not only has this been a service of historical significance, but it has also saved the Baptist Record staff untold hours of time in searching for information.

She has had to give up that ministry. As she leaves the endeavor that has made her a part of the Baptist Record family, we must make some effort to tell her how much we appreciate what she has done over a period of several years. We cannot adequately do so, but the inadequacy does not in any wise lessen our appreciation.

For a tremendous job with gigantic benefits that received little attention, Miss Ed, we thank you!

American Baptists soften abortion stance

CHICAGO, Ill. (EP) — A new resolution on abortion passed June 21 by the American Baptist Churches USA veers away from the denomination's former pro-abortion stance. Faced with increasing opposition to abortion by American Baptists, the church adopted a statement which condemns abortion "as a means of avoiding responsibility for conception; as a primary means of birth control; without regard for the far-reaching consequences of the act."

The statement also urges church members to volunteer their time with abortion alternative ministries.

The new statement no longer emphasizes a woman's right to choose abortion, which was strongly upheld in the church's former statement, adopted in 1981, but stops short of calling for legal protection for the unborn.

theater, be prepared to contact the local authorities (police chief, sheriff, county or district attorney) and ask them to look into taking legal action under state obscenity statutes to prohibit showing of the film.

DO NOT ATTEND THE FILM. Christians attending out of curiosity will only weaken the witness of the church.

Work with other Christian groups such as the American Family Association to present a unified and forceful repudiation of the film.

The Christian Action Commission has materials and pamphlets which will assist in putting this and other related issues before the people. The address is P. O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205.

God's people can win the battle for the minds and hearts of mankind.

Paul Jones is executive director, Mississippi Baptist Christian Action Commission.

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Central Church at Little Yazoo sent a group on a mission trip to Thermopolis, Wyoming, to conduct Vacation Bible School at Roundtop Baptist Church. Thirty children and young people enrolled. All the children were prospects for Roundtop, as neither they nor their parents were members there. In three previous trips, the Central group went to Montana and South Dakota. James Sermons, Roundtop pastor, invited them to conduct VBS and backyard Bible school next year at Kirby, Wyoming. Those on this trip were, left to right, Robbie Carter, Beverly Ables, Howard Vandever, Kale Johnson, Melissa Hancock, Shelly Swilly, J. B. Sherman, Glendora Sherman, Helen Ainsworth, and Riley Ainsworth, Central pastor.

BWA General Council elects Denton Lotz

NASSAU, Bahamas (BWA) — The Baptist World Alliance General Council has elected Denton Lotz as general secretary-treasurer.

Lotz, acting in the post since March 22, was confirmed during the annual sessions of the General Council meeting on Paradise Island in the Bahamas.

The council also accepted four new affiliate bodies within the Baptist World Alliance, heard a progress report on the 16th Baptist World Congress scheduled in 1990 and declined to act upon a proposal to change its current structures.

A total of 416 Baptists from 44 nations, one of the largest representations ever to attend such a meeting, participated in committee, commission and council sessions.

The BWA sessions coincided with the national independence day celebrations of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

Sir Henry Taylor, acting governor general of the 15-year-old nation, and Lady Taylor, gave a reception at their residence. They invited Baptist leaders, who mingled with diplomats and international business people.

A memorial service honoring the late Gerhard Claas followed, taking on special significance through the presence of his wife, Irmgard Claas, and daughter, Regina Claas.

The council elected Lotz to succeed Claas, who died in an automobile accident earlier this year. The council members voted unanimously that Lotz become general secretary-treasurer for the two unexpired years of Claas' current term.

The new member bodies, which bring to 141 the total number of BWA member unions and conventions worldwide, were the Convencion Bautista Libre, or Free-Will Baptist Convention, of Cuba; the

(Continued on page 5)

The Baptist Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

Thursday, August 4, 1988

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'Tourists' to Mombasa reap 4,720 decisions

By Craig Bird

MOMBASA, Kenya (BP) — It was a Swahili Pentecost.

Five days of evangelism through street preaching, door-to-door visitation and medical clinics in Mombasa, Kenya, led by 104 Southern Baptists who came to eastern Africa on a tour, has produced 4,720 professions of faith in Christ.

Several churches were organized, including one in an area where Baptists had been thrown out violently three times previously; a witch doctor accepted Christ and gave the woman who witnessed to him his beads; and bewildered German tourists halted in their walks along the beach as the Indian Ocean was turned into a baptistry.

Laymen who never had preached saw scores of people respond to their sermons, people who never had told another person how to trust Christ successfully shared the gospel — the message of Jesus — with those anxious to accept it.

"You volunteers are making us professional missionaries look bad," Mississippian Ralph Bethea Jr., the career missionary who was host for the group, joked one evening after listening to person after person recount almost unbelievable experiences of responses to the gospel.

But the joyful tears in his eyes revealed his true feelings about what is happening in the 1,000-year-old city that has long been a Muslim stronghold. The significance was enhanced since the decisions were

made during Ramadan — a sacred month of fasting for Muslims.

Groups of volunteers teamed with local Baptist church members, and the response staggered the Americans. "You can feel the spirit of God all over this place — but I'm not used to almost everyone I talk to accepting Jesus," was a typical testimony.

And the Mombasa Baptists gently chided the visitors for repeatedly asking new converts if they understood what they were doing: "They told you they understand, now hurry up — some more people (are) waiting to talk to us."

Over and over the contrast between Mombasa and the United States dominated conversations. "I took CWT (Christian Witness Training) a few years ago, and I figured I would use it here," said Bennie Norton, of Smyrna, Ga. "But I usually couldn't get past the second point before the person I was talking to would say he was ready to accept Christ."

John Bryan, pastor of Curtis Baptist Church in Augusta, Ga., used interpreters simultaneously. One gathered a crowd by telling them a man had come all the way from the United States to tell them something, another translated Bryan's sermon from English into Swahili to a second group while the third local Baptist took the names and addresses of people who had made decisions from the previous sermon.

The group from several states were led by Wayne Dehoney, former Southern Baptist Convention president and a professor at Southern Seminary. Dehoney owns a travel agency that specializes in evangelistic trips all over the world, often working with the volunteer section of the SBC Foreign Mission Board to tie in with Southern Baptist missionaries on the field.

After worshiping in local churches on Sunday — "They prayed and sang and preached for five-and-a-half hours!" — the Monday-to-Friday schedule called for medical/dental clinics during the morning and evangelism during the afternoons.

More than 3,700 patients were treated at the clinics which, according to Bethea, "provide a living picture of what we are saying to the people of Mombasa — that we love you because Jesus loved us. Many people are afraid to come to a church, but when they get help at a clinic their ears are opened to the meaning of the gospel, that God does want good things for them."

In 1985 the Kenya Baptist Convention reported six churches in Mombasa with a combined membership of 350. But in the past three years, more than 10,000 new believers have been baptized, including more than 1,000 Muslims, and more than 80 churches have been started in Kenya's second-largest city.

Ushindi Baptist Church does not

(Continued on page 6)

Parks calls for 70-30 ratio to speed evangelization

RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — The 10-year plan to have 70 percent of Southern Baptist missionaries giving more than half their time to evangelistic outreach and church planting is part of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's effort to escalate the rate of reaching the world for Christ, President R. Keith Parks said July 26.

It is one of a number of goals formulated by the new staff Global Strategy Group after input from missionaries and others and was recommended to the board from staff, Parks said. It is not intended to be an ultimatum that could force some missionaries to retrain or resign, as an article in the July 23 *Washington Post* indicated, he explained.

The *Post* article stated: "Under the new plan, hundreds of doctors, nurses,

teachers, veterinarians, administrators and agriculturists must retrain or resign. Medical missionaries and other professionals attending the meeting here (in Glorieta, N.M.) expressed doubt that they can do justice to their professional service work on a less than half-time basis." The article also said board trustees "ordered a major 'reconfiguration' of its missionary work in favor of intensified soul-winning efforts."

Parks said the 70-30 ratio is part of an effort to set up some specific long-range goals rather than just saying "everybody ought to be involved in evangelistic outreach."

"I've never heard it said, never intended to even imply, that we'd have hundreds of people who are resigning," he said. "We have said that we will offer retraining to help emphasize

the evangelistic outreach. But actually this is the basic purpose we've had all along."

The board is not trying to take someone with one specialty and retrain that person to be something else, Parks emphasized. Instead, he explained, the board wants to offer training in witnessing for Christ and in church-starting to missionaries who feel they need to sharpen their skills in these areas.

In some parts of the world, such as the Middle East, a 70-30 ratio may not be possible because open, aggressive evangelism is not possible, he noted.

He also pointed out that some doctors, agriculturists and other lay people on the missionary force already are giving significant percentages of their time to direct evangelism and starting churches. He said these are

"excellent models of what we're talking about and would be used as a model to encourage others to have a stronger evangelistic outreach."

The board will continue to send people as missionaries in a variety of job assignments, Parks said. He added: "But it is true we hope to intensify the evangelistic outreach. It's one part of the whole effort of trying to escalate the rate at which we are reaching the world for Christ."

Under the 70-30 plan, the other 30 percent would do tasks essential to balance and enhance the work of missionaries giving 50 percent or more of their time to direct evangelism, trustees were told during a July dialogue session.

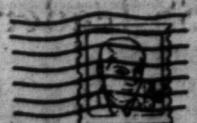
Other related goals call for: — Deliberate plans to reach out to parts of the world where missionaries

cannot serve or where the board has not been sending missionaries.

— Evaluation by individual missions, the groups of missionaries in a country, to see whether existing mission institutions that were started early on still are vital to the work there or perhaps are no longer as effective or as needed and could be phased out. Another option would be for national conventions to take over such institutions.

— Study of whether an administrative or institutional job now being done by a missionary could be done equally well or better by a national Baptist, enabling missionaries "to go on out and do the evangelistic outreach that many of them would like to do." Parks explained that the board is trying to encourage "deliberate, definite plans for all this to take place."

Letters to the editor



Letters to the editor must be limited to 300 words and the editor reserves the right to trim those that are longer. Editorial prerogatives must be reserved under all circumstances, and the opinions of the letter writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the staff of the Baptist Record. Only signed letters will be used, but the writer may request that his name be withheld.

War against drugs

Editor:

I am writing to you concerning a problem that has arisen in this state. You may already know that our state legislature has passed a bill which Gov. Mabus has signed into law that would allow alcohol to be advertised in our local newspapers and on our local TV stations. I, myself, along with many others, believe that this law is a compromise of our moral standards as a state and as a Christian people. I wrote to you because you have a tool that could very much draw our Baptist churches together against this law and have it repealed. One church alone would be able to do nothing, but many churches together would be able to abolish this demeaning law. Your Baptist paper is just the tool we need to draw our churches together. I am a member of the First Baptist church of Amory, Ms., and I have gained their support in this endeavor. The men of that church have drawn up a petition against this law; but, as I stated before, one church alone will not be able to do very much.

I know first hand the damage alcohol can do. I am a state prisoner, and I attribute most of the reason for being such to the addiction of alcohol. A life-long campaign against drugs and alcohol is nothing less than what God expects of me. Sir, I truly believe that if the Baptist churches of this state, along with other churches of different denominations, band together, we can prevent the damage that will surely result if this law is allowed to stand.

Phillip David Fears
P. O. Box 342
Amory, MS 38821

Because of circumstances, you have not been aware that the BAPTIST RECORD has been fighting this battle for years. Until this year, we were able to win. The fight was close this year, but a parliamentary maneuver allowed those favoring liquor advertising to win.

We would hope that the law would be repealed. We will pledge to do all within our power to bring that about. Thank you for your testimony and your concern. We are with you all the way. — Editor

Prayer in schools

For more than 20 years I have wondered why so many fundamentalist Baptist preachers have, apparently, never learned the truth about the 1963 Supreme Court decision concerning prayer in public schools, which dealt exclusively with prayers that had been mandated by governmental authorities.

On June 14, 1988, Adrian Rogers, then president of the Southern Baptist Convention, made the following statement: "In 1963 the United States Supreme Court outlawed prayer in our public schools." For one to make a statement of that nature is to reveal either total ignorance of the truth or total unwillingness to tell the truth.

That statement was made during the president's address.

That decision said that the board of regents in the State of New York could not mandate a prayer to be used in the schools of that state. During 13 years following that decision I taught in a public school in which there was prayer, as well as Bible reading, every morning. During 10 of those years I taught Bible in the same school (Pearl High School).

This letter is by no means to be construed as an indication that I hold a particular brief for the United States Supreme Court. Rather, it is conveying my conviction that "even preachers" should be prepared and willing to tell the truth.

C. L. Boland Sr.
Pearl

Proud of Mississippi

Editor:

We have just had a wonderful two weeks in mission meeting here in Chile while 12 WMU ladies from Mississippi worked with our 48 children. For the last 10 days these ladies have taught Vacation Bible School to the children in the morning and had recreation and crafts for them in the afternoon. This is always a highlight of the year for our children.

We want to thank many Mississippi Baptists for supporting these ladies and allowing them to minister to our children in such a wonderful way. We are proud to be from Mississippi.

Annette and Mike Racey
Marilyn and Eddie Graves
Betty Hart

Church needs help

Editor:

We are a small church with big hearts, big hopes, and small resources. We are in need of assistance.

On Saturday, Aug. 13, 1988, 8 a.m., we will attempt to frame-up, black-in, and roof our new 30 x 50 sanctuary. Our problem is this: we lack manpower. Our present attendance is that of five families.

We would like to appeal to your readers for help. We need carpenters, roofers, go-fers, nail pounders, board handlers, food helpers, and a whole lot of PRAYER POWER.

For those who feel that they can help, in any way, we would like to hear from you before August 6. Hearing from you will help boost our spirits and assist us in being organized.

Bill Wible, Bldg. Committee
Pathway Baptist Church
411 South George St.
Petal, MS 39465
582-3407

Resolution No. 5

Editor:

Apparently one reason why Resolution No. 5 has caused so much controversy is the possibility of the establishment of a Roman Catholic

type of authoritarianism. Actually that kind of authoritarianism has been evident in the convention long before this resolution was conceived.

The basis for my statement is that in 1984 I was turned down as a church planter apprentice for the Inland Empire Baptist Association of the Northwest Baptist Convention because I did not (and do not) hold the Landmarkist views regarding baptism and communion.

Bill Barrett
Lexington

Pastoral authority

Editor:

The article in the June 30 issue of the Baptist Record, "Prof sees clergy gaining in authority," would lead a person to believe that the New Testament has nothing to say on this subject. In fact, at least 20 of the 27 books of the New Testament deal with this in one way or another. In the pejorative statements about pastoral authority, Professor Bill Leonard is really criticizing the teaching of the New Testament.

Of course, the article itself reflects a prejudice against many of the pastors in the Southern Baptist Convention who have been elected to leadership position and a rejection of the resolution on the priesthood of the believer passed by our recent meeting of the convention. This seems to be the real purpose of the article. I question the value of having such things as this produced in our Baptist Record.

Jerry Dale Patterson
Oxford

Not a fundamentalist?

In a comment on a letter last week, a sentence read, "The Grapevine material, however, was mailed from Ann Arbor, Mich.; and the man who signed it is now known in Michigan as a fundamentalist. A typographical error reversed the meaning of the sentence. It should have read, "... the man who signed it is not known in Michigan as a fundamentalist." — Editor.

Answered prayer?

We prayed that the recent meeting to the Southern Baptist Convention would be inspired and conducted according to the red-letter bits of scripture, given for the guidance of his people, whoever, wherever, whenever it/they may be:

From the hilltop outside of Bethany: "And ye shall be witnesses unto me in your community, and in your state, and in your country, and to the uttermost part of the earth.

No exceptions: the soul-searching question is not whether but what sort. Answering that question, the I.D. card given us shows authority, method, and motivation for this lifelong task:

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love, one to another."

(The key word is NOT "tolerance.") Shall we pray some more?

Ross Stark
Ripley

Revival dates

Goodwater (Smith): Aug. 7-12; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m.; Mon.-Fri. at 7:30 p.m.; Max Price, evangelist; Brent Ballard, music leader; W.P. Blair, interim pastor.

Union (Covington): Aug. 7-12; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri. at 7 p.m.; Ted Lott of Lake Worth, Fla., evangelist; Phillip Butler of Hattiesburg, music leader; Joe Ratcliff, interim pastor.

Calvary, Gloster: Aug. 7-10; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Wed. at 7:30 p.m.; Chuck Pourciau, pastor of Centreville Church, evangelist; Mrs. Kathryn Barfield, Yazoo City, music evangelist; Bob Rogers, pastor.

County Line (Rankin): Aug. 7-12; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri. at 7:30 p.m.; Tommy Anderson of Emmanuel Church, Pearl, evangelist; Shelly Johnston, minister of music at Timberlawn, Jackson, music leader; Larry McDonald, pastor.

Parkway, Houston: Aug. 7-10; 7 p.m. nightly; Wayne Fleming, missionary to Mexico and Vardaman native, evangelist; David Kendall, minister of music, music leader; Lyman Thomas, pastor.

Walker Hill, Brandon: Aug. 7-11; 7:30 nightly; Mike Howell, pastor, Fair River, Brookhaven, evangelist; Curtis Hatcher, minister of music/youth, First Church, Richland, music leader; Bernard Nail, pastor.

Oak Grove (Simpson): Aug. 7-12; Sunday at 11 a.m., dinner at church; Mon.-Fri. at 7:30 p.m.; G.P. (Pat) Bufkin, pastor of Pilgrim's Rest Church, Crystal Springs, evangelist; Bob Harris, music leader; Glenn Kelly, pastor.

Tallahoma (Jones): Aug. 7-12; Sunday 11 a.m., dinner on the grounds, no evening service Sunday; nightly at 7:30; Jeff Martin, evangelist; Larry Webb, music director; N.R. Thornton, pastor.

Concord (Yazoo): Aug. 7-12; Sunday, at 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds; Mon.-Fri. at 7:30 p.m.; Rick Spencer, director of missions, Monroe Association, evangelist; B. B. Neely Jr., music evangelist; Ralph Cain, pastor.

Whitesand, Prentiss: Aug. 7-12; services at 10 a.m. and 7:15 p.m.; John Merck, Easley, S.C., evangelist; music leader, Deborah Dickens, church music director; Billy Greene, pastor.

Rock Bluff, Morton: Aug. 7-11; beginning with homecoming on Aug. 7; morning worship at 10:45 with Don Purvis, guest speaker; dinner at the church; afternoon singing featuring "The Gospel Messengers" of Jackson; Mon.-Thurs. at 7:30 p.m.; Wilson Winstead of Briar Hill Church, Florence, evangelist; Howard Benton, pastor.

Hepzibah (Lawrence): Aug. 7-12; Sunday worship at 11; dinner on the grounds; 6:30 p.m. services; Mon.-Fri. at 11 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.; backyard Bible club for children, Mon.-Fri. at 11 a.m.; Joe Royalty, pastor of Crooked Creek Church, evangelist; Bob Goolsby, pastor.

Pleasant Hill, Bogue Chitto: Aug. 7-12; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; weekdays at 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Billy R. Williams, pastor of First Church, Gautier, evangelist; J. T. Hannaford, associate pastor of First Church, Moss Point; Mrs. Willa Moak, pianist; Mrs. Mildred Wallace, organist; Floyd Higginbotham, pastor.



Powerline for teens

Is age a factor in love?

Dear Powerline:

I'm 15 years old, going with the greatest guy in the world, who is 25. I love him very much. We enjoy the same things, and I get along fine with his friends and family. My parents and some of my friends think he is too old for me. What does age have to do with love anyway? I can't imagine life without him.

Powerline Answers:

I must agree with your parents. This age differential is too great at this point in your life. This is pro-

bably the most important time for developing your own personality and life. There may be exceptions, and you may be one of them. If so, that's great.

There are no ironclad rules on this subject, but there are some important guidelines. Think about the things that will be best for your growth and development, things like meeting lots of people and different ideas. This guy you're dating now may be great and may enjoy doing the same things you do, but he's not too worried about developing his personality. He should have that just about licked, or at least be at some point of maturity. And if you don't date others besides him, you'll miss a lot of opportunities to develop ideas of your own from the people you would have met in other situations. Think about it. You've got a lot to gain.

SOUTHERN BAPTIST RADIO-TV COMMISSION / FORT WORTH, TX 76150

BWA elects Lotz general secretary

(Continued from page 3)

Maharashtra Baptist Convention of India; the Tripura Baptist Christian Union of India; and the Baptist Convention of Southern Africa.

The Cuban convention was added to two existing member bodies in Cuba. India is home to 11 affiliates, more than any other country except the United States.

The Baptist Convention of Southern Africa is the second affiliate from South Africa. Trevor M. Swart, general secretary of the Baptist Union of Southern Africa, a long-time BWA affiliate, asked the council for the privilege of seconding the convention's application. "It is important that the convention have its own identity because it will strengthen the united Baptist witness in South Africa," Swart said.

The convention's general secretary, Gideon Makhanya, said admission to the Baptist World Alliance would give the membership a feeling of self-worth and human dignity towards which it "has been painfully striving." Talks of a merger of the two South African groups recently were dropped.

Membership figures of the four bodies shown in their application forms add 55,910 to the world Baptist total reported at the end of 1987. The new total for BWA affiliates worldwide now stands at almost 35.5 million.

The BWA structure committee report was referred for further study.

The council instructed the structure committee to consider proposed changes from member bodies and present a further report to the executive committee in March 1989. A final draft then will be submitted to the 1989 General Council meeting Aug. 1-8 in Zagreb, Yugoslavia.

Program plans for the 16th Baptist World Congress in 1990 were polished by core committees meeting in Nassau with the council.

Chairman Roy Bell of Vancouver, British Columbia, said a new aspect of the congress, Aug. 14-19, 1990, in Seoul, Korea, will be more than 60 workshops each afternoon. They will range from helps for evangelism, education and church growth to moral issues confronting the church today, as well as questions of Christian women, men, and youth witnessing in a changing world society.

In other action, the council approved starting theological conversations between the Mennonite World Conference and the BWA. The recommendation from the study and research division urged starting the conversations during 1989.

Presently, the Baptist World Alliance is completing five years of discussion with the Roman Catholic Church and in 1989 will complete a four-year round of conversations with the Lutheran World Federation. The talks will be reported to the Baptist World Congress in Seoul in 1990.

SS leaders; space available at Gulfshore

Leadership conferences for Sunday School training at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly have space available. They are the Sunday School Leadership conferences Aug. 1-3 and Aug. 8-10; Sunday School Preschool/Children's Leadership conference, Sept. 9-10; Sunday School Youth/Adult/General Officers/Dean Leadership conference, Sept. 16-17. For registration, contact Frank Simmons, Henderson Point, Pass Christian, MS 39571. For program information, contact Keith Wilkinson, Sunday School Department, MBCB, Box 530, Jackson MS 39205, phone 968-3800.

Samford begins pastors' school

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — The new Divinity School of Samford University will inaugurate its program of university-based theological education with a Samford Pastor's School Aug. 8-12.

Workshops led by denominational leaders will explore such topics as enriching worship, expository preaching, the minister's finances, theology of evangelism, church growth, and others.

"Preparing God-called ministers for effective service in the local church is the mission of the Divinity School of Samford University," said Timothy George, dean of the divinity school. "The Pastor's School will inaugurate the program with a week of inspiration, challenge, and renewal led by an outstanding array of denominational speakers."

The Divinity School of Samford University will offer programs leading to the master of divinity degree beginning this fall, George said. The first such program at a Southern Baptist college or university, the school was made possible by a gift from an anonymous donor earlier this year. The gift was the largest from a living individual in Samford history.

preserving history. The resolution pointed out Miss Robinson "has served the Baptists of Mississippi well throughout her association with the Mississippi Baptist Convention and with the Historical Commission and expressed appreciation for her contributions.

The resolution on Prout noted that the commission members were saddened by his death after his serving "faithfully as a member of the commission for more than two years." It noted further that Prout had served Baptist churches and conventions in Mississippi and in other states and had contributed "to the knowledge of the history of our state through teaching and research."

Historians thank Robinson and Prout

The Mississippi Baptist Historical Commission has passed two resolutions that have two Mississippi Baptists as their subjects. One of the resolutions calls attention to the service performed by Edwina Robinson, who has indexed the Baptist Record for several years; and the other notes the death of William Ennis Prout, who was a member of the commission.

The resolution on Miss Robinson notes that she has given a part of her time for a number of years in the work of indexing the Baptist Record and that she has traveled over the state in interviewing prominent Baptists for an oral history program initiated by the commission. It was noted that her work in indexing and interviewing had made a "great contribution" in

Homecomings

First, Ovett: Aug. 7; Sunday School at 9:45 a.m.; worship at 11 with former pastor Wade Allen preaching; covered dish dinner at noon; afternoon service at 1 p.m. led by Joe Dale Boutwell, pastor.

Big Springs (Lincoln): Aug. 7, 11 a.m.; former pastor Howard D. Smith, director of missions, Warren/Yazoo Association, guest speaker; special

music by the Perry Spencer Family; dinner on the ground; afternoon sing at 1:30; Randy Farmer, pastor.

Friendship, Geeslin Corner (Grenada): Aug. 7; Sherman Barnett, morning speaker, with Terry Cain, minister of music, leading music; noon meal; services at 1:30 with special music and Eugene Barnette speaking; no evening service.

Expanded aid offered ministerial students

By Hardy R. Denham Jr.

Beginning in the fall semester, 1988, the Board of Ministerial Education of the Mississippi Baptist Convention will be making financial aid available for all qualified church-related vocational (CRV) ministerial students. This marks the beginning of an expanded program for the Board of Ministerial Education since aid has only been available for preaching ministerial students.

Students eligible to receive this aid must be committed to a vocational church-related ministry. In addition to official verification by the local church that the church has made such a commitment, letters of recommendation must also be supplied to the board. Students applying for aid are required to sign an agreement with the board as well as permit the financial aid directors on the campuses to provide pertinent financial data to the board. The aid granted is not repayable unless the student fails to follow through on his/her commitment to a professional ministry. The aid is available only to Baptist students attending one of the Mississippi Baptist colleges.

Students desiring to apply for this aid provided by the Board of Ministerial Education through the Mississippi Baptist Cooperative Program budgets will be provided application packets at the time of their registration for the fall semester. The packets contain application forms, agreements, a statement of board

policies, and form letters to be used in obtaining personal references. All applications are considered by a committee of the Board of Ministerial Education, and representatives of the Board will visit each of the Mississippi Baptist college campuses during the week of September 19-23 for the purpose of interviewing applicants.

Hardy R. Denham Jr., is president, Board of Ministerial Education, Mississippi Baptist Convention.

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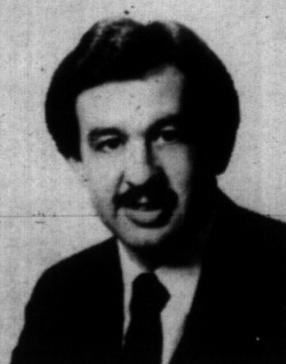
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HMB provides some alternatives to abortion

By Mark Wingfield

ATLANTA (BP) — The Southern Baptist Home Mission Board will encourage churches to address abortion as "the No. 1 social and moral issue of our day" by starting crisis pregnancy centers, HMB President Larry Lewis said.

Board directors in February elected Sylvia Boothe, a former foreign missionary, as the agency's first coordinator for abortion alternatives. For the past two years, Boothe directed a crisis pregnancy center in Oklahoma City, the first such center begun by a state Baptist convention.

"I think mainstream Baptists have wondered why we haven't done anything," Boothe said. "We haven't done enough. We've given it lip service."

Boothe's responsibilities are among "the most important and vital

ministries" of the Home Mission Board, Lewis said. While agencies such as the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission are charged with educating Southern Baptists about moral issues, the Home Mission Board is charged with ministering to people affected by moral issues.

The board's ministry will provide resources for churches, associations and state conventions to begin crisis pregnancy centers, Lewis said. The board will not operate any centers itself.

A crisis pregnancy center is a pregnancy testing and counseling ministry conducted in a neutral, non-threatening environment, Boothe said. A center's purpose is to promote positive solutions to unwanted pregnancies.

Boothe plans to begin training

courses, a newsletter, and a referral system for churches interested in crisis pregnancy centers. She teaches a 20-hour course for training volunteer counselors.

In its first two years, the Oklahoma City center helped 1,800 women, she said. The average client was between 14 and 24 years old, white, middle-class and Southern Baptist. Only one-third of the women were actually pregnant, although all had reason to believe they might be.

Volunteer counselors administer free pregnancy tests and answer questions about the results.

If a woman is pregnant, the counselor will discuss options with her.

Those who feel they cannot stay at home during their pregnancies are placed under the care of Christian

families in "shepherding" homes. Women unable to pay for medical expenses are referred to Christian doctors who donate their services. Those who feel they cannot raise a child are referred to a Baptist children's home or other adoption agency. And women determined to seek abortions may be referred to other women in the community who have had abortions and now regret it.

If a woman is not pregnant, the counselor will discuss chastity. Boothe said she encourages women to realize they can choose what they will do with their bodies.

Regardless of a woman's decision, counselors attempt to keep the door open for future ministry, Boothe said, noting, "If she decides to have an abortion, we hope to have ministered to her in such a way that she will feel

free to come back."

Because a crisis pregnancy center ministers to the total person, many who visit the center eventually profess faith in Jesus Christ. At least 60 women have made such decisions at the Oklahoma City center, Boothe said.

Boothe encourages Christians not to panic on either side of the abortion issue. Christians ready to stand against abortion should consider what is the proper Christian response. She has found that to be ministering in a helpful way rather than destructive actions such as picketing abortion clinics.

A good crisis pregnancy center staffed by volunteers will require a minimum investment of \$30,000 per year, she said.

Mark Wingfield writes for the HMB.

Richardson to speak at MC commencement

James M. Richardson, pastor of First Church, Madison, and a past-president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention, will be the commencement speaker at Mississippi College's summer graduation, Aug. 12, at 2 p.m. in the A. E. Wood Coliseum.

There are 155 candidates for degrees, including 84 undergraduates and 71 graduate students.

In addition to the regular degrees, John Clifton McDonald of Shreveport La., one of the nation's top authorities on liver transplants and other organ transplants, will be awarded the honorary doctor of science degree. McDonald, a native of Baldwin, graduated from Mississippi College in 1951 with "special distinction" and later earned the doctor of medicine degree from Tulane University.

McDonald has been professor and chairman, Department of Surgery, Louisiana University School of



Richardson

McDonald

Medicine in Shreveport since 1977 and is a consultant surgeon at several hospitals throughout Louisiana.

Richardson, the commencement speaker, earned the bachelor of arts degree from Mississippi College in 1948 and later received the master of Theology degree from New Orleans Seminary. Mississippi College awarded him the Doctor of Divinity degree in 1975.

Lewis Nobles is MC president.

Mississippi church ranks high among 500 fast growing churches

ATLANTA — First Baptist Church in Madison has been named the fastest growing church of any denomination in the state, according to a recently released study.

The survey focused on congregations which had gained more than 500 members in worship attendance in calendar year 1986.

Though it did not post the 500 gain in worship, its gain of 210 placed it as

the fastest growing church in the state.

The church, which has James Richardson as pastor, reported a total worship attendance of 680 for the year.

In a state-by-state tally, the Assembly of God denomination had the fastest growing churches in 15 states while Southern Baptists claimed eight of the 50 states.

Tourists reap 4,720 decisions

(Continued from page 3)

even have a building, but attendance runs 2,000 to 3,000 and it has established 25 house churches and sent out 50 missionaries to other parts of the country in two years.

Shortfalls in the Southern Baptist Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for foreign missions or low levels of contributions through the Cooperative Program may seem like mere numbers until they translate into a

new Christian going without a Bible because Southern Baptists in the United States failed to give.

But while Bethea, a first-term missionary from Mississippi, is frustrated by the unmet needs in personnel — there are only two SBC career missionaries working in church development in Mombasa — and budget, he accents the positive. "Working in Mombasa is like living the book of Acts," he said.

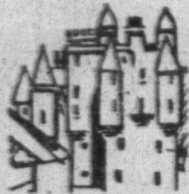
New house opens at Gulfshore

This is the new staff housing and conference center at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly, Pass Christian. The million dollar facility houses the summer staff and will offer conference space for about 60 persons during the off season. Pictured also are the living room and a bedroom. In the living room are Paul Mitchell of Troy Ala., at left and summer staffers Mark Sansing, First Church, Vicksburg, a student at Mississippi State; Lisa Parker, Mt. Vernon Church, Columbus, a student at Mississippi University for Women; and Paula Haley, Main Street Church, Goodman, a student at MSU. Matthews and his wife Dana are students at New Orleans Seminary working as houseparents this summer.

The new conference center will be available for bookings Sept. 1 through the end of April. Dedication for the new facility and for the renovation at Gulfshore is set for May 8, 1989.

(Tim Nicholas Photos)





Faces and places

by Anne Washburn McWilliams



"When I needed somebody, you were there"

Joanne* was scared. She had just found out for sure that she was pregnant. That might have been good news, except that she was 17, single, and a senior in high school.

Who could she ask for advice? Her father was ill and the doctors gave him no hope for getting well. Her mother was always wandering around in a cloud of alcohol; she knew she would find no support from her. Joanne didn't want to have an abortion. Yet how could she pay medical bills or support a child? How could she face her classmates?

When she heard about the maternity care unit at the Baptist Children's Village in Jackson, it sounded like a solution. "What would it cost?" she asked.

"The Village will give you room and

board," came the reply. "Mississippi Children's Home Society, an adoption agency which works with us, will pay medical expenses and, if you choose, will place your baby in a private home for adoption."

"The one thing we require," said Clare Nowlin, director of social services for the Village, "besides your being under 25 and a resident of Mississippi and willing to abide by Village rules, is that you be willing to consider giving your baby up for adoption. But understand, that is your own decision. We won't tell you what to do."

So Joanne moved into one of the three bedrooms in the maternity unit at the Village, five months before her baby was to be delivered. The cottage had been redecorated with funds provided by members of First Baptist

Church, Booneville. The housemother, Frances Boyanton, explained to her that Joanne would have to cook her own breakfasts, and added, "Almedia Chappell, the other housemother, and I will do the rest of the cooking." Many mornings, Joanne was sick and didn't want any breakfast at all. But she managed to keep her room clean as told and to do her own laundry and help a bit with the general housecleaning.

She and the other five pregnant out-of-wedlock girls at the cottage spent an hour each in the mornings with a social worker. At times they received educational and vocational counseling. Once a week each of them met for spiritual counseling with Jerry Jackson, a minister who is associate to the public relations director, Kermit McGregor.

They kept appointments with doctors in the afternoons or took part in some of the recreational activities offered them — swimming, crafts classes that Mrs. Boyanton taught, sewing, reading, or watching television. The others sometimes went to movies or ball games or to the library. Though they could not keep their own cars, someone would drive them places if they wished to go. Several did volunteer work at the University Hospital twice a week. But not Joanne. "No," she said. "I might see one of my friends or my brother's friends who might recognize me. I'd rather stay here."

Her privacy was respected, as she

had been promised. Few on the Village staff even knew her name. "No one, except names you gave us, will ever know from us that you are here," Mrs. Boyanton reassured her.

Secretly, Joanne was still scared. What if, while giving birth, she died? Childbirth classes, taught by volunteer nurses from Mississippi College, helped to ease her fear.

Not a member of any church, she knew that one of the Village rules was that she must attend church services while there. It need not be off campus, where someone might know her, but she would have to attend the church services conducted at the Village Sunday afternoons and Tuesday nights.

The night her labor pains began, she called Mrs. Boyanton, who was to drive her to the hospital and go with her to the delivery room. To Mrs. Boyanton, it seemed that these events always came at night or on weekends. Yet in her 11½ years of work in four programs of the Village, she had found this one the most rewarding, and also certainly the most taxing to her mind. As a sort of substitute husband and father, she had to think how to fill the girls' needs — they had so many — the pregnancy itself and having to give up the baby. And she had to think how to keep them busy and well.

When Joanne examined her baby's tiny hands and feet, tears trembled on her lashes. "You know you have 72 hours now to change your mind before the adoption takes place," she was

reminded. But she had already made the hard decision, believing it the best one for her child.

After a few more days at the Village, she returned home. Village personnel continued with several months of follow-up care to help her readjust to family life and to help her deal with the grief of giving up her baby.

Peggy Taylor, unit director for crisis care at the Children's Village, said that 31 unwed mothers between ages 14 and 25, from all sections of Mississippi, have lived in the maternity unit since it opened in February, 1987. Average age has been 19; some have stayed seven months and some only two weeks. No one has been turned away because of race or religion. Joanne is only one example. Every case is different, and each girl could recount a different set of circumstances. Some have come from homes where there are strong church relationships. Some have belonged to families more financially well-to-do than that of Joanne.

"Six hundred abortions a month take place in Jackson alone," Mrs. Taylor quoted a local clinical source, and added, "Our maternity unit provides an alternative to abortion." "The best part of my job," said Frances Boyanton, "is the sense of fulfillment I find when girls write back and say, 'When I needed somebody, you were there.'"

*Joanne is not her real name.



Four women most closely involved with the Children's Village ministry to unwed mothers are, left to right, Peggy Taylor, unit director, crisis care; Frances Boyanton, housemother; Clare Nowlin, director of social services; and Almedia Chappell, housemother.

Divided court upholds teen pregnancy law

WASHINGTON (BP) — The U.S. Supreme Court ruled June 29 that a 1981 federal law providing tax dollars to religious and other organizations to fight teen-age pregnancy and abortion does not violate the First Amendment to the Constitution.

In a 5-4 decision handed down on the last day of the current term, the narrow high court majority ruled the Adolescent Family Life Act has a secular purpose, does not have a primary effect of advancing religion and does not excessively entangle church and state.

Besides the American Jewish Congress' opposition to the law, numerous other religious groups joined the case in support of the challenge. Among them was the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs, whose general counsel, Oliver S. Thomas, had asked

ed the justices to strike down the provisions in the law mandating participation by religious groups at taxpayer expense. Religious organizations that fight teen pregnancy ought to do so with their own funds, Thomas argued.

While upholding the law's constitutionality, Chief Justice William Rehnquist, writing for the majority, ordered the case back to the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia for a further determination on whether the law is being implemented in a manner consistent with the First Amendment ban on an establishment of religion. The chief justice acknowledged the record in the case "contains evidence of specific incidents of impermissible behavior" by numerous religious organizations that have received benefits under the law.



Vinson

By Tommy Vinson
Matthew 13:55

The button on the man's lapel read, "I'm really serious!" As we talked I soon discovered what he was serious about. No doubt about it — he was serious about Jesus Christ. I'm not suggesting that wearing a button is the way to demonstrate your faith, but you have to admit it is much better than no method at all. Say, let me ask you — "Are you serious?" Serious, that is about your relationship with Jesus Christ.

In our text Jesus has just returned to his hometown of Nazareth. When they met for worship he looked into the faces of folks who had known him since the day Joseph and Mary returned to Nazareth from Bethlehem. To them he was "only the carpenter's son," as Phillip's translation puts it. The Son of God was in their midst; but to them he was only a carpenter, not the Christ. He was an ordinary handy-man, not the unique holy man. He was just another layman, not the Lord.

Why didn't they take him seriously? Why would they not allow their hearts to be moved by the obvious? Basically it is for the same reason people do not take him seriously today.

First, they did not take him seriously because they were UNIMPRESSED WITH THE GLORY OF HIS PERSON. The remark about his being "Mary's son" was a calculated insult. How sad! They knew so much about Jesus, but they did not know him. They knew his height, the color of his eyes, the texture of his skin; but they did not really understand who he was. Are you impressed

Devotional

"Is not this the carpenter's son?"

with the glory of his person?

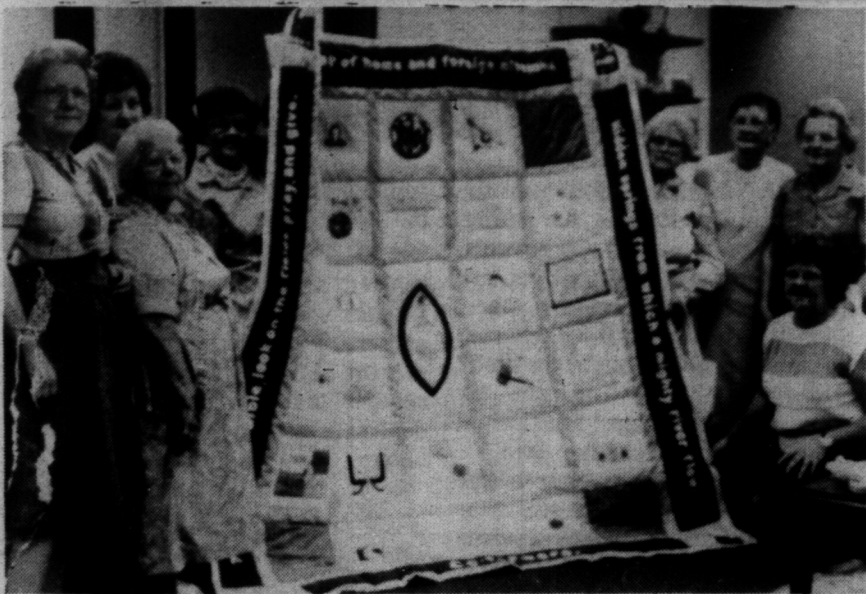
Henry Bosch, in "Our Daily Bread," relates the story of when Raphael's picture, "The Sistine Madonna," was brought to Dresden, Germany. It was displayed in the castle before the king. However, the best lit spot in the room was already occupied by the throne. Observing the situation, the king immediately stepped down from his royal chair, saying, "Make room for the immortal Raphael!" He had respect for the gift of Raphael and his glorious work. So, too, there is but one throne in the human heart; and the most important question for any of us to answer is this: Who is to occupy that place of authority? Will it be Christ or self?

Then they didn't take him seriously because they were UNRESPONSIVE TO THE GREATNESS OF HIS POWER. No doubt his reputation as a miracle worker had preceded him to his hometown. It seems that they would have rushed to him expecting his blessings. Not so! "And he did not many miracles there because of their unbelief." Their unresponsiveness to his power caused them to continue living in their own spiritual impotency. Are you responsive to his power, which he makes available to every believer today?

Last, they did not take Jesus seriously because they were UNAWARE OF THE GRAVITY OF THEIR UNBELIEF. It was as if their unbelief had tied the hands of omnipotence. The chilling atmosphere of doubt froze the stream of God's power and grace. Too often we view our doubt as a weakness. It needs to be treated as a wicked thief that robs us, as it did folks of Nazareth, of God's blessings. Someone has well said that "nothing so blinds us to the real character of sin as the fact that it is our own."

Tommy Vinson is pastor, Colonial Hills, Southaven,

Just for the Record



Baptist Women of Pearson Church made a WMU centennial quilt. When they toured the Baptist Building several weeks ago, they took along the quilt. Above, they are showing it in the Baptist Record office. Those who helped to make the quilt are Geneva Peden, Ruth Jennings, Almon Breland, Virginia Mask, Clara Payne, Hazel Different, Juanita Gallaspy, Martha Beavers, Pam Hamby, Kathryn Madden, Pauline Corban, Elaine Sorey, Meriam Brown, WMU director, Nina Rayborn, Mildred Herrington, and Linda Thornton.



Mt. Carmel Church, Leake County, sent 21 youths and adults to Eureka Springs, Ark. to attend the Great Passion Play. Left to right are Lisa Wilkinson, Shannon Jackson, Kim Jolly, April Tucker, Stacy Baker, Elizabeth Tucker, Lynda Kelly, Keith Kelly, Gayl Evans, Justin Evans, Gloria Allen, Danny Allen, Alice Hensley, Margie Wilkinson, youth director, Tracy Wilkinson, Betty Robinson, Rodney Wilcher, Kim Wolverton, pastor, Dale Jenkins, Chris Jenkins, and Craig Evans.

Lexie Church, Walthall County, honored all fathers recently during its morning service. Receiving special recognition were the fathers with the highest attendance in Sunday School and Church Training. Named as Sunday School Father of the Year was J. B. Wilson. Ronnie Johnson was named as Church Training Father of the Year. Both (pictured at right) were presented a trophy by Sheila Conerly, family life director.



Following the evening worship service the Third Annual Men's Cake Bake Contest was held. Entering cakes and the winners were Jerry Conerly, second place; Mac Conerly, tied for third place; Ray Dunnam; Greg Hill, tied for third place;

Major Johnson; Ford Martin, first place. Edward Pogue; and Robert Van Dan Cakes were baked prior to the contest and judged on appearance, originality, and taste.



Lexie cake bake winners.

Phalti Church, Jefferson Davis Association, dedicated its baptistry June 5. Moulding for the renovation project was given in memory of Mrs. Rogenia Butler by her granddaughter, and granddaughter's husband, Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Layton. A painting of the Jordan River was done by Will Dixon. The baptistry committee included Barbara Thompson, Mary Ruth Butler, and Nancy Parish. Dennis Allen is pastor.

Pearl Hill, (Leake) observed Youth Day May 29, with youth in charge of the morning service. Tim Smith from Sunrise Church, Leake County, was featured speaker.

Eighteen youth and four sponsors from Wayside Church, Vicksburg, attended a youth conference at Gulfshore Baptist Assembly recently. From the group four made professions of faith and there were numerous re-dedications. It was the group's first time to attend the conference center. Charlie Bufkin is minister of youth and Michael Weeks is pastor.

VBS at Gore Springs Church closed June 10 with eight professions of faith. On the following Sunday, seven joined the Gore Springs Church with the others joining a nearby church. These seven were baptized on June 26 along with two others who made professions of faith. Mrs. Jay Stroud was VBS director and Everette Martin is pastor.

Kaleidoscope II is a Lee associational youth event scheduled for Friday night, Aug. 12, at 7 p.m. at First Church, Nettleton. Combined youth choirs of six area churches will present "Positive I.D.," a musical drama.

Acteens of First, Nettleton, selected as the theme for the evening "Sharing God's Love." Master of ceremonies will be Randy Wood, minister of music at First, Verona.

Paul Koonce, minister of music at First, Tupelo, will direct the combined choirs from First, Tupelo; First, Amory; Meadowood, Amory; West Heights, Pontotoc; West Jackson Street, Tupelo; and First, Saltillo. After refreshment time, the second half of the evening will be given to group singing and presentation from various youth groups, including clowns, puppets, drama teams, and guitars.

A Mission Fair, sponsored by the Acteens, GAS and Mission Friends in Tallahatchie County, was held May 28. This was a promotional event to help start other mission organizations in the association. Glinda Hardy is director of Acteens.

A group of youth and adults from First, Lambert attended the Church Recreation Conference at Ridgecrest, June 3-10.

Those who attended were Cecil Allen, Terry Allen, Angela Bailey, Bubba Bailey, Jonathan and Rhonda Dancy, Nathan Dancy, Lori Embry, Wanda Fortner, Heather Franklin, Shannon Hood, Christal Horne, Libby Horne, Philp Long, Joann Roper, Hunt Shellman, Chris Smith, Susan Smith, Dave and Pat Selvy, Bill Tutor, Suzanne Williams, and minister of youth Deborah Thomas.

The Mississippi Ministers' Invitational Golf Tournament will take place Sept. 15-16. For details, contact Charles Nikolic at 362-8676, or Milton Koon at 373-6677 or 371-1531.

Mississippi Baptist activities

- Aug. 7 Day of Prayer for World Peace (CAC Emphasis)
Aug. 8-11; overnight 12-13
WMU Leadership Training, Camp Garaywa (WMU)
Aug. 8-12 Camp Clean-Up Week, Central Hills Retreat (BRO)
Aug. 9 Area Church Weekday Education Clinic, FBC, Columbus (CAPM)

Revival dates

Magees Creek (Walthall): Aug. 7-12; services, 10 a.m. until 11 a.m., and 7 nightly; Ashley Freeman, speaker; Dave and Mona Dewese, music; John Purvis, pastor.

Rocky Point, (Leake): Aug. 7-12, Sunday, regular services; weekdays, 10:45 and 7 nightly; Robert Parrish, pastor, bringing the messages; Welton Madden, music.

Farmhaven (Madison): Aug. 7-12; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri. at 7 p.m.; dinner on grounds Sunday afternoon; evangelist, J.C. Prather, pastor, Center Terrace Church, Canton; Gene Rester, First Church, Jackson, music leader; Norman Walker, pastor.

First, Stonewall: Aug. 7-12; Guy Henderson, director of evangelism, MBCB, evangelist; Penny McLemore, music director; Albert H. McMullen, pastor.

Chunky: Aug. 7-12; Sunday services at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mon.-Fri. at 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.; John Collins, pastor of Calvary Church, Vicksburg, preaching; Wayne Campbell, pastor.

Crowder: Aug. 7-12; Sunday evening service at 7; Mon.-Fri. at 10:30 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.; Bobby Cobb, Randolph Church, Pontotoc, preaching; Steve Warren, First Church, Florence, and a former music/youth director at Chunky will be music leader; senior adults will have monthly lunch after services Wednesday; Harvey Sewell, pastor.

First, Braxton: Aug. 7-10; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. with dinner on the grounds in the afternoon; Mon.-Wed. at 7:30 p.m.; Herbert M. Price, Ft. Worth, evangelist; Tim Canterbury, Brandon, music leader; Joe T. Lusby, pastor.

Oak Grove, Noxapater: Aug. 7-12; Sunday at 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.; weekdays at 7:30 p.m.; Kent Cochran, pastor of Calvary Church, Louisville, evangelist; W. A. McPheeters, pastor.

Gillsburg: Aug. 7-10; homecoming on Sunday; Sunday School at 10 a.m.; morning worship at 10:45; covered dish lunch, special music and preaching at 1:30; Mon.-Wed. at 10:30 a.m. and 7 p.m.; Mike Hedwood, pastor of Walker Church, Walker, La., guest speaker; Ken Russell, Kenner, La.; music director; Paul Pearson, pastor, and Danny Richardson, church music director, will assist in the homecoming and revival services.

Zion Hill, Liberty: Aug. 3-7; homecoming, Aug. 7; nightly at 7; Sunday School at 10 a.m., worship at 11, covered dish lunch at noon, and gospel singing at 1; Cary Kimbrell, pastor of Trinity Church, Baton Rouge, evangelist; Del Morgan, minister of music at Kentwood Church, Kentwood, La., music leader; Woody R. Rimes, pastor.

Ecrú, Ecrú: Aug. 7-Aug. 14; weekday services, 10; evening services, 7; Truman Scarborough, First, Coffeeville, evangelist; Rusty Miller, music; Hal Bates, pastor.

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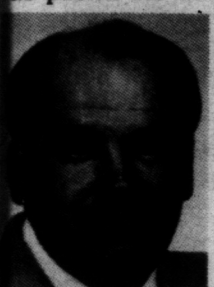
Carmel Church, Monticello, has called J. Merrill Cassel as minister of music and youth.



Merrill most recently served Harrisville Church, Simpson Association, and is a student at Mississippi College. He is a native of Union. His wife, Amy, is from Newton.

The couple resides in Clinton. Merrill plans to attend New Orleans Seminary.

Griffith Memorial Church, Jackson, recently called Bruce Cappleman as pastor. He had served as pastor of First Church, Houlka, for nine years, nine months.



He is a graduate of Blue Mountain College and New Orleans Seminary, and has done additional studies in counselor education at Mississippi State University. He is married to the former Martha Childers of Ripley; they are the parents of three children, Scott, Christa, and Kati. Griffith welcomed the Capplemans with a reception on July 17.

Parkway Church, Tupelo, has called Mark W. Gregory as pastor, effective July 17. He goes there from the pastorate of Trinity Church, Bloomfield, Ky. and from Southern Baptist Seminary from which he has com-

pleted his work for the PhD degree. A native of Carthage, he is married to the former Jan Thomas. They have a two year old son and are expecting a second child in September.

Hebron Church, Yazoo County, recently called William Hutto as pastor. He is married to the former Barbara Miley, and they have two children, Karen and William. His most recent pastorate was Mount Vernon Church, Newton County.

Hebron Church will celebrate its 139th birthday on Sunday, Aug. 14.

David Oliver has resigned as minister of music at Crossgates Church, Brandon, to become minister of music at Geyer Springs, First Church, Little Rock, Ark. He holds the bachelor of music and master of music degrees from Mississippi College and attended



Oliver New Orleans Seminary. Under his leadership the music ministry grew from one adult choir and two Children's Choirs with 90 people to include 120-voice adult choir, 75-voice youth choir, eight children's choirs with 145 enrolled, a 25-piece church orchestra, a senior adult choir, and several ensembles.

Mrs. Debra Boswell has joined the staff at First, Lambert as pianist, effective July 10. Mrs. Boswell and her husband, Hugh Boswell, live in Clarksdale and have four daughters.

Lula Church, an open country church west of Pocahtontas, has called M. David Sills as pastor. Sills, a senior at Belhaven College, is married to the former Mary Phillips of Jackson. They have two children, Christopher and Molly. Sills was ordained to the ministry July 10, by his home church, Briarwood Drive, Jackson. The ordination charges were given by Thomas E. Winn, associate pastor, Briarwood Drive. The ordination sermon was preached by Tom J. Nettles, Professor of Church History at Mid-America Seminary, Memphis.



Ron Swindall has joined the staff of Highland Church, Laurel, as music and youth assistant. He moved from Sandersville Church, Jones County. D. W. Sewell is pastor and Philip Griffin is minister of music and youth.

Briar Hill holds centennial fete

Briar hill Church will hold an "old fashioned" weekend revival as part of its Centennial celebration. The dates are Aug. 5-7.

The Friday evening service will be at 7:30, Saturday at 2 p.m. The Sunday service will be at 11 a.m. after Sunday School at 10. Lunch will be served at noon with an afternoon of singing and testimonies. James Madison will be preacher. Wilson Winstead is pastor.

Names in the news

Scott Cappleman, was licensed to the gospel ministry on July 3 at First Church, Houlka. The license was presented by his father, Bruce Cappleman, pastor at Houlka (who has now moved to Griffith Memorial, Jackson.)



He is a 1988 honor graduate of Houlka High School, and was valedictorian of his class. He plans to enroll in college this fall.

Ed Onley of Norcross, Ga. received the 1988 PACT Consultant of the Year Award from the Southern Baptist Convention's Home Mission Board during Home Mission Week at

Ridgecrest Conference Center. Onley, director of the Christian Ministries Department of the Georgia Baptist Convention, was recognized for his outstanding achievement in metropolitan missions through the Project Assistance to Churches in Transition (PACT) program.

Onley, a native of Norfolk, Virginia, served as pastor of Springfield Church, Morton, Miss., 1967-1970; as a student at William Carey College, he served the Avery Church, Greene Co., and Derby, Poplarville.

Lowrey Memorial (Tippah) recently honored two deacons, Joe Hardin Guyton and William May. Guyton served 1952-1987 and May served 1962-1987. As active deacons, both received plaques from the church,

recognizing their service, and were named as deacons emeritus. Matt Buckles is pastor.

Larry Herndon is available for full time gospel ministry, supply, and interim work. He may be reached at Rt. 7, Box 97, Stakville, Ms 39759, or phone 324-3204 after 6 p.m.

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Robert and Janice Mooney, missionaries to Zambia, report a change of address (P. O. Box 20499, Kitwe, Zambia). He was born in Marvell, Ark., and considers Jackson, Miss., his hometown. The former Janice Anglin, she was born in Bogalusa, La.

Dorothy Schweinsberg, 83, a retired Southern Baptist missionary to Colombia and Spain, died in a Tyler, Texas, hospital July 5 after a long illness. She and her husband, Henry W. Schweinsberg of Australia, were

appointed by the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board in 1941 as missionaries to Colombia, where they worked for 24 years. They later served in Spain for 14 years.

Tom and Gloria Thurman, missionaries to Bangladesh, have arrived in the States for furlough (address: 410 Dale St., Columbia, Miss. 39429). He is a native of Monticello, Miss., and she is the former Gloria Philpot of McWilliams, Ala.

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- Mission Action chairmen/group leaders, **Sandra Nash**
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- Experienced Acteens directors/leaders, **Pam Keith**
- Inexperienced Acteens directors/leaders, **Jan Cossitt**
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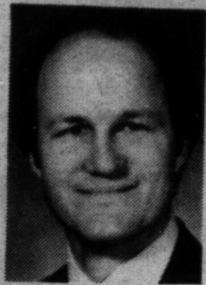
God can be trusted to care for his people

By Steve Odom

Ezra 7:6, 9-10; 8:21-23, 31

What is the most important doctrine of the Christian religion? Some would say it is the doctrine of salvation; others might say it is the second coming of Christ. Perhaps a few would say that the most important Christian doctrine to them is that of providence. It would be difficult to say that there is one doctrine of supreme importance above all others, for the full range of God's person and work demands our attention. There are some people, however, who put decided emphasis on particular doctrines. Former Cambridge professor, H. H. Farmer, went so far as to say that the doctrine of providence is synonymous with religion, and that to deny it is to deny religion.

Whether we agree with Professor Farmer or not, a consideration of the concept of providence is in order as we reflect on the experience of Ezra and the exiles who were returning to Jerusalem from Babylonia.



Odom

LIFE AND WORK

ning to Jerusalem from Babylonia. Ezra and his fellow Jews saw God at work in their present circumstances with a view to accomplishing his purpose in the future. The word "providence" means "to see ahead." The Christian doctrine of providence affirms that God is working in the present to assure the accomplishment of his will in the future.

Before turning to the experience of Ezra, we may do well to distinguish between God's providence and three concepts often confused with providence. Fate is often confused with providence. Fate, though, limits what happens to us to our own choices. In that sense, we are masters of our own fates. But where is God? Predestination is also confused with providence. Predestination is the opposite extreme of fate in which human beings have no say and God has all the say. And then there is the concept of destiny. Destiny is where we are going under the influence of self, nature and history. Like fate, in destiny there is an absence of God's action in nature and history.

Providence is the caring activity of God in this world to the end of accomplishing his purpose. That God cares and that God is involved in this world are seen in the account of Ezra's return to Jerusalem. Ezra was likely sent back to Jerusalem from Babylonia because he was given an official position in the Persian government as a scribe. His skill as a scribe also meant that he was versed in the law of Moses (7:6). His contact with the Persian government and his knowledge of the law of Moses made him the ideal person to return to Jerusalem and begin what was to become Judaism. It was providential. And, of course, we know how God continued to work out his purposes through the religion of Judaism.

Ezra was committed to continue studying the law of the Lord, to practice it and teach it (7:10). It appears that Ezra had a keen sense of God's involvement in the return to Jerusalem and the restoration of temple worship. Because he felt that "the good hand of his God was upon him (7:9)," he embarked upon a four-month journey and arrived with a resolve to carry on the work of a scribe — to study, to practice and to teach the law of God.

On the journey from Babylonia to Jerusalem, Ezra had an interesting experience which tested his own sense of God's providential care (8:21-23). He had boasted to the king that God, in his providence, would take care of those returning to Jerusalem and protect them from harm. Consequently, Ezra felt that he could not request a military escort from the king, which he likely would have been granted. Fortunately, Ezra did not see providence as something that relieves us of our responsibility as human beings. After fasting and praying with the people, Ezra moved ahead in organized fashion and was able to make it to Jerusalem without the loss of any temple materials or life. He sensed that the hand of God was over them (8:31).

We do not need miraculous deliverances from seemingly impossible circumstances to convince us of God's providential care for us. It is his creative power that made us and keeps us. We may not see his name in lights, but we can be certain that God can be trusted to care for his people.

Steve Odom is pastor, University Church, Hattiesburg.

Israel breaks covenant; God sees their sin

By Robert Earl Shirley

Exodus 32

Our lesson this week would remind us that people are vulnerable to sin even at a time of high religious fervor, perhaps especially so.



Shirley

Israel should have believed in the power of God for they had witnessed it in their liberation from Egyptian bondage. Likewise, there could be no doubt as to the glory of God for it had been demonstrated on the mountain. Apparently, their memory was much too short lived. Too many church members today with even greater evidence are prone to become impatient with God when their prayers do not receive an immediate affirmative answer and question whether God is all that he had promised to be.

The anxiety created by Moses' delay in coming down from the mountain prompted the people to urge Aaron who was acting temporarily in his stead to make a visible god to go before them. Their sin is one that is still prevalent in our churches today when people are unwilling

UNIFORM

to conceive of God as Spirit and, in their effort to picture him in a more concrete form, give him characteristics of their own choosing that fulfill their own selfish desires and needs.

Although Israel had formally covenanted with Jehovah, it is obvious that they were actually following the leadership of a mere man rather than that of God himself. Unfortunately, Aaron proved to be an inferior leader and listened to the voice of the crowd and granted their request. It is possible that he was attempting to dissuade them by appealing to their vanity and selfish love of wealth when he instructed the people to bring their golden earrings to him. From these, he fashioned a golden calf before which he made an altar and proclaimed a feast to the Lord, thereby indicating that he regarded the calf not as exclusive of Jehovah but as representing him. His feeble efforts to keep their attention upon Jehovah was short lived, though, and their bringing of burnt offerings and peace offerings was soon turned into play. The word, "play," pictures a far more

serious condition than it seems on the surface for it probably refers to sexual orgies often found in the fertility rites of Canaanite Baalism. Perhaps we should not blame Aaron for the extent to which their depravity sank, but one cannot help but wonder what a difference it might have made if he had taken a stand when the first temptation presented itself.

God himself informed Moses while he was still on the mountain that Israel had corrupted themselves and that he had observed their sin. They had violated that which was to be prohibited in the second commandment by making the graven image, they had worshiped it and attributed to it their deliverance, and they had wasted no time in doing so.

It was not necessary for the law to be written on tablets of stone for people then, or is it now, to know that nothing is to come before or stand in place of God. Jehovah's reference to them as "your people" rather than "my people" indicates that he considered them as having been totally unfaithful to the covenant that had bound them to himself. They had followed a man whom they could see in days gone by but they were not yet ready to follow God by faith. "Stiff-necked people" are those whose necks

are hard to the extent that they will not bend to the will of God. The severity of the nation's sin is seen in the statement by God that he is ready in his wrath to destroy them. Even then, he would not forsake his promise made years before to Abraham, so he promised Moses that the old covenant would remain intact and the great nation would ultimately come into being through him. Had Moses been a lesser person, he might well have accepted this promise.

That his love for his people was greater than selfish interest he might have had is seen in the fact that he earnestly besought God to change his mind and forgive their unfaithfulness. He reminded God of the promises made to the early patriarchs and expressed concern that their destruction would give a negative testimony to the world. We need to be aware at all times that the non-Christian would be observing those of us who claim faith in Christ. In their judgment of us they will pass judgment on God. They need to see that there is a better life than the one they are now living. They will either see or not see that in us.

Robert Earl Shirley is pastor emeritus, Parkway, Tupelo.

Constantly questioned, Jesus confronts his enemies

By Frank H. Thomas Jr.

Matthew 21:23-22:46

Jesus our Lord had enemies while on earth. That may come as a surprise, but any reading of the gospels will prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus had opposition. We Christians, his followers today, should not expect not to have opposition. In the passage for this Sunday, we find the authority of Jesus challenged by the chief priests and the elders of the people.



Thomas

The word for authority in Greek is interesting, meaning literally "out of being." One's authority comes out of one's being. Something which is truly authoritative comes from the individual and not from anyone else. That which the scribes and elders of the Jews claimed to be authoritative was not out of their being but it was derived from some other source. Jesus took his authority directly from God through his own being.

In response to the question of his opponents, he refused to tell them his authority unless they would tell him whether the baptism of John

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came from heaven or from men. They thought among themselves and refused to answer for fear that Jesus would trap them in their statement.

The subject of opposition to Jesus continues with parables. The parable of the two sons focused upon the one son who at first refused to work for his father but who later agreed to work and actually did work, and the other son who initially agreed to work but did not go. The first son who initially refused to work but then agreed to work and actually did work is the one who actually did the will of his father. The point made by Jesus was that those who do the will of the Father, be they publicans and harlots — those who have come lately to the kingdom of God — are more obedient in doing the will of the Father than those who claim to do the will of the Father but do not do it. The next parable was the parable of the vineyard and the tenants. The owner of the vineyard sent his servants to take the crop from the tenants, but the tenants killed the servants and finally killed the son of the owner who came on behalf of his father. The point of the parable is that the one who was re-

jected and killed by the tenants is the same as the one who was rejected by the builders of the house of Israel. That stone which the builders of Israel rejected has become the head of the corner.

The parable of the marriage feast continues in the same vein with a king who made a wedding feast for his son.

When the king entered the feast and saw there one who was not clothed in a wedding garment, he had the man bound and thrown into outer darkness. "Many are called but few are chosen." Those who are chosen are the ones who respond in faith to the invitation and call of the Lord. Jesus knew that his enemies were not the ones who responded in faith to the call of the Lord. In the next verses Jesus' enemies once again tried to trap him with the question of paying taxes to Caesar. Were he to answer yes or no, they would have him in a difficult position. Jesus found a way out of their trap by calling for a coin and asking whose image and superscription were on the coin. When they answered him, "Caesar's," he responded that they should render to Caesar the things that were Caesar's and to God the things that were God's. Jesus confounded his enemies so that they marvelled and went away.

The next section has to do with the Sadducees' question about the resurrection. In the first place, they did not believe in the resurrection, so that their question was not really seriously intended. Nevertheless, in answer to their question, whose wife would the woman be who had been married to each of seven brothers, Jesus answered that there would be no marriage in the resurrection. God is the God of the living and not of the dead.

So we see that Jesus was constantly being questioned and put under pressure by those who were opposed to him. He never failed to respond to them or to have an answer for them. He attempted to treat them with dignity wherever possible, but he also realized that he could not keep them from rejecting him. We, too, will find enemies as we seek to serve and follow our Lord. Let us take the same stance toward our enemies and the enemies of our Lord by having an answer for their criticisms and doubts. Let us never allow them to get the best of us. Let us also remember the danger of rejecting Jesus and failing to fulfill God's commandments and God's requirements.

Frank H. Thomas is pastor, Alta Woods, Jackson.

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SCHOOL

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OUR BACK TO SCHOOL REQUIREMENT TO MEET BUDGET DEMANDS IS \$160,000.00. It is essential that maximum gifts be made this year because operational expenditures for food, clothes, utilities, insurance, health care, transportation, etc., have increased.

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(To be continued)

NOTICE

VILLAGE ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION
BI-ANNUAL REUNION
Powell Chapel

India Nunnery Campus
Saturday, August 13, 1988
Beginning 9:30 A.M.

Baptist Record

Despite nagging questions, Parrishes don't doubt God

By Toby Druin

DALLAS (BP) — They have worked through some of the "what ifs" and know they probably will still have to deal with some "whys," but James and Martha Parrish don't doubt God called them as Southern Baptist missionaries to Ecuador. And soon they hope to go back and resume their ministry there.

That ministry — he is a general evangelist and church planter working with two congregations, and they both have a variety of outreach ministries in the seaport town of Esmeraldas — was interrupted and the Parrishes' lives altered forever July 4.

A gasoline explosion and fire at a service station killed their 3-year-old son, John Martin, and critically burned his brother, Stephen, 7. Parrish also was burned severely on his face and arms as he struggled to pull the boys from their burning truck. They had stopped for gasoline before enjoying a day at the beach with another missionary couple, the Tom Owensens, who were coming from Santo Domingo.

Parrish and Stephen were first briefly hospitalized in Esmeraldas, then flown to Quito and then to Methodist Medical Center in Dallas July 8.

undergoing daily treatment and therapy at the hospital.

Stephen, with 40 percent of his body burned — principally his legs, arms and head — will be hospitalized another two weeks and will undergo daily treatment and therapy thereafter for an undetermined period. He was to have skin grafts to his legs, which were the most severely burned, July 21.

The Parrishes recounted the events

in mid-July as they prepared to move into a missionary residence provided for them by Fairview Baptist Church in Grand Prairie, Texas. They expect to be in the house for three or four months before returning to Ecuador. Their address during this time will be 324 N.E. 12th, Grand Prairie, Texas 75050.

Parrish was standing beside the family's truck as a service station attendant primed a flooded gas pump. Both boys were in the cab of the truck when a spark inside the pump apparently ignited the blaze.

The father ran to the door of the truck to help his sons. "I grabbed Stephen and tried to find John and couldn't," he said. He pulled Stephen from the flames and set him aside. He started to go back for John but saw Stephen moving toward the flames and grabbed him again and carried him to safety.

"As I turned back to the truck, it had exploded again, I guess from more fumes or something," he said. "I just couldn't get in. Something was telling me John was already dead."

A taxi driver stopped and drove father and son to the Esmeraldas hospital. Parrish immediately called his wife from the hospital, asking her the capital city, and get them moved there. The hospital in Esmeraldas is poorly equipped, he said. Before he and Stephen could be treated in the emergency room there, he had to walk across the street and purchase antiseptic to clean their burns.

Mrs. Parrish did not see or hear from her husband or Stephen for almost four hours, from the time of the phone call until they got to the plane.

During this time, she contacted fellow missionaries, and they worked together to make arrangements to fly Parrish, Stephen and John's body to Quito, where John was buried July 5.

"They were some of my worst moments," she said, "not knowing how badly burned both of them were. There was the thought that they could both be dead by now."

Both Parrish and Stephen were hospitalized in Quito that evening and Stephen was in critical condition until July 8, when doctors determined he could be moved to the United States.

Both have been undergoing treatment for their burns, which are immersed twice daily in a whirlpool bath and the dead skin scrubbed away. Parrish was burned on his face and ears, hands and arms as he reached into the truck for Stephen. His eyes were protected by his glasses.

Stephen, who was wearing shorts, was burned most severely on the inside of his legs above the knee. The backs of his legs and arms and face, all uncovered, also were burned.

In spite of the pain of the burns and the heat of the fire, Parrish had difficulty at first accepting the reality of what had happened, he said.

"Yet there was a peace that accompanied and gave me the ability to get my son to the hospital and to see he was cared for and to call my wife," he said. "The Lord was good to be there in the midst of tragedy."

Running through his mind, he said, were the "what ifs."

"What if I hadn't stopped here at all, what if when we saw we couldn't get gas for awhile (because of the pump) we had just pulled on out?" he said he reasoned. "But I realized that I couldn't live with 'what ifs.' There are a lot of what ifs, and I guess some of those will still come back to haunt me. "But God is still God, and it happened, and he gives you the grace to go on."

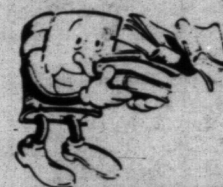
The Parrishes have been in Ecuador only since December and had just begun to get through all of the initial cultural adjustments in Esmeraldas when the tragedy struck. They are the only Southern Baptist missionaries in the city of 120,000 on the coast just south of the Colombian border in northwestern South America.

The Parrishes believe God called them to Ecuador and plan to go back, they said, probably to Esmeraldas, but they are open to service in some other place in the country. Going back to Esmeraldas and its memories — they had celebrated John's third birthday only two days before the accident — will be especially tough.

"We feel like the Lord can use this accident and what has happened as a witness to the people in the area," Parrish said.



WE'RE WITH YOU — As Martha Parrish (right), and a therapist watch, missionary James Parrish reassures his 7-year-old son Stephen before one of the child's twice-daily burn therapy sessions at Methodist Medical Center in Dallas. Stephen was severely burned July 4 in a gasoline explosion and fire at a service station in Ecuador, where the Parrishes work as Southern Baptist missionaries. The fire killed his 3-year-old brother, John. Parrish also was burned on his face and arms as he struggled to pull the boys from their burning truck. (BP) PHOTO By Toby Druin



Book reviews

Dale. Robert D. KEEPING THE DREAM ALIVE. Nashville: Broadman, 1988.

The author is well-known in Baptist circles. He is professor of pastoral leadership and church ministries at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is the author of *To Dream Again*. This present book is a sequel to it.

The book picks up where "To Dream Again" left off. Once a congregation has dreamed a dream and has formulated a definite plan of ministry for years to come, how do you keep the dream alive? No question, many pastors and staff members have asked themselves that from time to time.

From the beginning, the author uses weather terminology to describe

various facets of keeping the dream alive. The book is divided into three sections: Congregational Weather: Metaphor, Model, Process; Congregational Weather and Health; Fair Weather in Congregations. In my opinion the frequent use of weather terminology made the book more difficult to read and comprehend. Possibly, Willard Scott would have understood it better!

The subject of the book is appealing. The problems one encounters from this subject need addressing. In my opinion, the author clouds the picture somewhat. — Reviewed by Greg Potts, pastor of Providence Baptist Church, near Meadville.

North Columbia to mark 50th

North Columbia, Marion Association, is planning its 50-year anniversary homecoming for Aug. 7. The church was organized on August 3, 1938. Special services will begin at 11 a.m. Former pastor, Maurice H. Waltmon of Waynesboro, will bring the morning sermon. All guests will be recognized in the morning service. Lunch will follow in Fellowship Hall.

Services will resume at 1:30. Robert Sones of D'Lo, who was ordained by North Columbia, will bring the afternoon message. Former music director, David Dewease, and his wife Mona, of Bassfield, will bring special music.

All former pastors will be recognized and given a brief time to give a word of greeting. Jackie Cooke is pastor.

SCRAPBOOK

Let me hear Your gentle whisper

I sometimes feel so lonely,
As if I had no friend;
And the night is so foreboding,
And to sorrow seems no end.

Let me hear You whisper
In the stillness of the night;
May I feel Your hand upon me?
Then I'll know that it's all right.

Lord, when my body trembles
And my heart is wracked with fear,
When my troubles overwhelm me
And answers aren't quite clear,

Let me hear Your gentle whisper,
And to my problems give me sight;
Put Your loving hand upon me,
Then I'll know that it's all right.

And when my toils have ended
At the setting of the sun,
When this earthly life is finished
And eternity has begun

Let me hear Your gentle whisper
And see Your brilliant light;
May I feel Your hand upon me
And hear You say that it's all right?

—Richard A. Ryan
From prison

Baptist Record

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August 4, 1988

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